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passage in the Postscript to *Appreciations* where Walter Pater defined the romantic element in art as "strangeness in beauty." Our author called on Arnold, but a greater than Arnold said that. He summoned Bacon, but Bacon proves the prime witness for the defense. That "strangeness in proportion which Bacon noted in all excellent beauty does in our later days lead men rather than form to paint pure color; rather than tunes to compose difficult harmonies; rather than facts or platitudes to write phrases that shall mean more than they say and send the reader farther than they go. A neat mind is good in its way; an exact mind is comfortable; a limited mind has its advantages. The real trouble with the limited mind is that it wants to shut every one else into its own confines, to measure the universe with its tiny hand rule. The expansive temperament which so annoys our author, at least, lets every one else expand at will.

*The New Laokoon* utters several truths by the way. Its facts are usually correct. If the conclusion drawn is usually wrong that is not the fault of the minor premise. The book has the merit of being, to the limit of the author's appreciation, serious. But it takes a big man to preach restriction and an impassioned spirit to enforce the weight of law.

HOW TO KNOW ARCHITECTURE. By FRANK E. WALLIS, A.A.I.A. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1910.

We have heard it objected to this book that "it has not much information for those who know architectural books," but as all teaching from the beginning has been with the purpose of transferring more people from the group of the ignorant to the group of the enlightened we can, even if a little perversely, look on this criticism as a recommendation.

Seriously, then, this is the very strength of Mr. Wallis's book—that it is for people who are not architects. Architects have books in plenty and have had for a long time; books of a size and a thickness to make this little volume seem to shrink in its covers. But such books lie dustily on office shelves, and the American public (from whom, nevertheless, clients are raised up) continue to feed on Baedeker or the more indigestible actualities of Fifth Avenue and Broadway. It would be well if one-hundredth part of the people that our census shows would read this book.

The development of architecture is only an expression of the development of civilization and its history is a large field. This fact is the first barrier that shuts out the general public occupied, as it is, with other things. Mr. Wallis has simplified it because he has gone at it simply. He has divided roughly the history of civilization into a few large periods, and you can see as you follow him how naturally the history of architecture follows these same divisions. "Architecture," he says, "is an accurate and readable human document."

After architecture was once established as a science and an art its development followed the development of trade and prosperity, and its great creative epochs were coeval either with great epochs of material development, as in Rome, France of the Valois and Bourbons, and America of to-day, or else with epochs of spiritual expansion, as the true Gothic in France. As to the styles themselves, the earlier ones were carried along the trade routes, varying as they went and developing or inspiring new movements where they settled; but the styles even in their earliest developments were

always only expressions of the needs or beliefs of the civilization of the time.

The book is fully illustrated and here appears a clever and sensible idea. In showing pictorially the different handlings that meant and that still mean the different styles, the author has given examples standing in America to-day as well as the real examples "of the moment." On one page will be seen the Parthenon defaced by its bombardment; on another our magnificent old Custom House in Wall Street, now also changed; then we see the porch of St. Trophime at Arles and beside it, the porch of Trinity Church at Boston; again, the library at Venice and the Tiffany Building on Fifth Avenue; or Bullfinch's State House in Boston yielding nothing in simple dignity and clearness of expression to the St. Paul's of Sir Christopher Wren in London. In this way the author has brought in many, perhaps fifty, examples of American work down to the Pennsylvania Railroad Station, finished only two months since. This is of great value, for the main architectural styles are more readily fixed in the mind by examples that one knows familiarly than by the primal examples abroad which are so far out of reach as to represent a rather vague perfection to the inquiring mind.

The author does not hesitate to bring us to the present moment and to examine our conditions and possibilities. He sums up clearly and fairly the influence of the *École des Beaux Arts* on our present-day work and ends thus: "While the *Beaux Arts* is responsible for many of the best men in the profession, it must also accept the responsibility of producing a large number of half-trained, half-finished practitioners."

He rightly sees that the tall building, as an honest expression of an utterly new but honest construction, is the problem the solution of which future generations will see belonged to us; that the architect who accepts the new possibilities of iron as simply as the Gothic architects accepted the possibilities of the stone arch and who tries to express these possibilities is progressing, while he who is an archæologist will remain so. He realizes that in covering an iron skeleton we are subject to the codes of the building departments and the fire departments of various cities, but this does not excuse "the astounding incongruity of a Greek temple with all its niceties of detail elongated to an extraordinary height."

The book ends by citing the great work of the modern architectural guild, the American Institute of Architects, and its advocacy of the creation of a Federal Bureau of Fine Arts; and leaving the present behind, it closes with an expressed belief in the coming of a governmental Department of Fine Arts based in part on the effective systems in use in France, and other European countries.